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ABSTRACT

Female literacy in Pakistan is among the lowest in the world. In 1981, the literacy rate was 16 percent for females, and 7.3 percent for rural women. Distance education can effect many social changes. Females would be the main beneficiaries because it is not socially acceptable for girls to leave home for education; parents do not like coeducational schools; social attitudes do not permit school education for girls on the conviction that any freedom to go out will result in sexual involvement with males; and women with low levels of education are stigmatized and accorded low social status. Both rural and urban conditions can be improved by providing women with integrated programs in hygiene, food, health, and basic and vocational education, as well as professional training in the sciences, trades, and industry. Problems with Pakistan's distance education system include the lack of opportunity for question and answer sessions; no provision to make up missed classes; absence of teachers to advise students on the use of the materials; lack of competition; lack of competent teachers; corruption and poor funding, resulting in nonavailability of materials in libraries; low standards, resulting in receipt of degrees without corresponding learning; lack of facilities for lab work in science and technical training; lack of rights to duplicate costly foreign video materials. (TD)

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TECHNOLOGY AND DISTANCE EDUCATION OF WOMEN SHARING EXPERIENCE IN SINDH PAKISTAN.

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Abstract.

In Pakistan the Distance Education can bring a lot of social changes. The main beneficiaries can mostly be females.

- In Pakistan the women were kept under seclusion and still many families do not like that their female members go out-side the boundary walls of the home. In such cases the distance education is a very useful alternative to such families who want their females to upto-date i.e. knowledge.

Introduction.

- The female literacy rate in Pakistan is amongst the lowest in the World. In 1981, 26.2 percent of the population above 10 years age was literate, but he overall male literacy was 35.1 percent as compared to 16.0 percent of female and gender differences varied from a high of 53.1 percent of urban men to a low of 7.3 percent of rural women.

Various constraints.

- Many people in rural areas want to continue education of their female children but it is not socially accepted that girls leave their homes for education. The female enrollment in schools drops sharply after primary lever (4-5 years at school) and in

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urban areas too mostly during the early years of secondary education (a total of 10 years schooling at age 14-16)

- In Sindh as per tradition parents do not like co-educational school and after completion of the first five years primary educations, girls and boys are taught separately. This segregation of the sexes is maintained upto the college level.

- The middle class rural families or conservative urban people do not object to any form of education imparted at home. Distance education will increase the chance of education for such girls and women, other-wise deprived by formal education.

- Due to urbanisation and industrialisation, immigrants from rural areas are ill-equipped to cope up with economic conditions and due to resitricated mobility and lack of educational and market skills, they are handicapped in seeking employment. This can be improve by distance education.

- Socio-cultural norms, attitudes, customs and family status do not permit school education for girls, on the conviction that any freedom to go out, will ultimately result in girls involvement with boys, teachers and other men sexually and mar their chance in suitable marriages which are arranged by parents both in rural and urban areas. Only very small percentage of university educated males and females marry of their own choice.

- In women with low level of education, attainment and performance of work are stigmatised as extremely poor and consequently they are accorded a low social status.

- In Pakistan both the rural and urban area conditions can be improved only by providing women, integrated programmes in hygiene, food, health, basic and functional adult education as well as promotion of professional training invarious fields of sciences, including trade and industry. Up till now most of economic activities

performed by women are from poor social groups and they perform jobs which do not require a high level of educational attainment.

- There is general correlation between membership of a particular class and level of educational attainment and occupations i e , doctors usually comes from middle class, teacher form lower middle or upper lower classes and labour from the lower class. There are very few expectations of doctors and engineers from upper class or lower middle class.

- Less educated women try to improve their families income by means of some additional job at home and causal jobs outside the home, due to their lack of or low level of skills and training. Large majority of women are not prepared educationally for gainful employment.

- In general rural women face lot of constrains like poverty, illiteracy of parents and social taboos, and women are forced to stay under the boundary of their house.

VARIOUS TRENDS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION.

- Now a days people have no activity but to watch the television, and educational program through television can have a greater impact as compared to distance education through the mail. Which is a costly as compared to television, which is available in every house in urban areas and in every tenth house, in the extreme poor rural localities.

- The serious problem with this type of distance education is, the courses and lessions arranged through video are that, teacher play active role but there is no involvement of student, who cannot raise the questions and get their answers. The distance education can be made more effective if it is combined with face to face questions and answers sessions. It could be arranged either through telephone lines or on weekly basis, in

form or plenary Sessions and workshops having a team of teachers to answers these question to satisfy the students.

- The distance educational institutes have not provided any facilities to the students to get an old lessons and make their continuation in their study. This brings some kind of frustration among the students as they have great difficulty in absorption of missing lessons and jump to higher level. This trend can easily be rectified by using the private business video shops, which provide videos on rent of Rs. 10 per day. I the distance educational institute provide all the course in the form of videos and place them in video shops, these facility so provide will make the students to cope up with their missing lessons.

- Another difficulty which is quite common in distance education is the absence of guidance and teachers advise to the learner, with regards to the used, books and other material. This means special arrangements of libraries, which must be fully equipped with easy-to use modules and manuals, latest scientific and technical books and if possible each library must have one teacher on part-time basis and available to fixed hours to students and discuss their problems.

- The distance education in Pakistan has not produced brilliant students after completion of their studies. The draw back in our distance educations system is that there is no competition, which may force students to compete with others and get position. In the absence of educational competition distance educational programs laps in to stagnancies.

- The teacher role is also very suspicious in distance education in Pakistan. The general concept among a laymen is the competent teacher with good academic back-ground and foreign degrees are hired by the private institutes because they can afford higher salaries which get back by high tuition fees. The teachers of medium calibre are gone to government institutes at lower salaries as its easy to get job at such salaries and the

y can easily make money after school hours by coaching the same students at heavy tuition fees. This leaves unemployed teachers with poor educational background and they are hired for distance education. Due to low I.Q. these teachers survive on poetry, drama or writing children's stories.

REGULATION IN DISTANCE EDUCATION.

* The distance education is provided in Pakistan by the help of Allama Iqbal Open University with foreign collaboration. They do have very few competent teaching staff and excellent syllabus similar to foreign institutes. Due to week economy in Pakistan corruption prevails each stage of education has lead to non availability of audio-visual, teaching manuals and other study related books, magazine and pamphlets in the libraries.

INFRASTRUCTURE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION.

* The existing infrastructure has a draw-back that up till no they have provided academic degrees without acquiring the corresponding amount of learning and education. The infrastructures should be withdraw ineffective and inadequate management, which is responsible for poor standard.

EXPERIENCES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION.

* Our experience shows, that even after receiving educational degrees through distance education, students have not acquired enough ability to computer with regular students. This results in to their rejection in open competition for getting a jobs. This example also leads to discouraging new students to obtain distance education.

* In many cases distance education is used to obtain educational degrees to get promotions or higher grades in government jobs. People already working in lower

grades, find it easy to get higher degrees by distance education and use this not a source of learning or knowledge but to get extra remuneration in job.

- It is also true distance educational program in the fields of science and technical training are not effective as students have no laboratories for their practicals. Thus distance learning students, always prove misfit when exposed to real working conditions and lack the confidence, courage and ability for further training programs.

REQUIREMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION.

- The requirement of the distance education in Pakistan in un-limited if it considered that the distance education will fill-in the gaps in the present system of education in Pakistan. The gaps again are un-limited in all most each and every subject as well as profession. There is dearth of books, laboratory facilities and practical workshops to fill-in these gaps the availability of information and knowledge in advance countries is also un-limited. There are organizations in Europe and U.S.A. which produce in videos and these cover each and every aspect of even the minor subjects. The material is costly and duplicating it in Pakistan is dis-allowed. If we establish a general library of cassettes either in all the Universities or in the Pakistan National Centres and publicise the availability, there would be many people who would borrow these for viewing at home and learn about the gaps in all scientific fields including agriculture, engineering, medicine, industrial fields and etc. The cost involve will not be much especially if the Government procures such educational materials and gets a licence to duplicate up to 40 sets in Pakistan, and replicate, when it wears out. The Government has to take assurance from the borrowers that they will not duplicate or use it commercially.

- This would change the attitude of people over night increase their ability in various professions and boost economy.

Conclusion.

* Distance education help in the development of skills, already present or start the development of new ones,,that lead to better earning and job opportunities. By gaining education today many girls acquire education not merely as a status symbol or to improve their marriage prospects but in order later, to pursue some occupation as source of earning.

* Individual attitudes and behaviour in the family i.e., friendship tolerance, consideration of the situation and etc., have severely been influenced by the education. With education women have better chances of getting the job and employment, Distance education definitely will increase education and economic activities of women.

* The female get extremely low salaries, due to low level of education. This condition will be improved by distance education.

* Distance education will help women in getting a jobs and income and with this income, she will improve living conditions. While now only one male person earns and many others share, when women also get jobs due to education, the source of family income will increase. This will help the family to complete in growing social economic conditions.

* The distance education will help women to get accepted the social role of women and prepare them for activities other than those as house-wife and which she can perform out-side the boundaries of the house.

* Distance education will help the women to achieve economic independence.

* Distance education will act an instrument for bringing social change, it will act as a catalyst for bringing change in the status of women in the society as whole.

* Distance education will help in acquiring skills as well as develop decision power, to improve economic status and general well beings.

* Distance education course, will help the women in the improvement of day to day life pertaining to nutrition, health, agricultural practices, animal husbandry, food storage, productivity in work, alternative skills and occupations,. family relationship including parenting, community children and growth, housing and quality of life and will increase the range of cultural activities.

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